

From: Lambert David
To: 'microsoft.atr(a)usdoj.gov'
Date: 12/6/01 8:36pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

To Whom It May Concern:

I understand you're collecting opinions on the settlement, so I thought I'd add my \$0.02.

Microsoft is a large corporation - so large, I believe, that for it to be severely damaged would probably adversely impact the economy of the country. This would, obviously, be bad for everybody.

The problem is that our system (which is the best there is) has flaws, and one of them is that Microsoft was allowed to grow to the size it presently has. That any one company could, by its failure, drag down the whole economy is a failure on the part of the system in its entirety - and of the DoJ and judicial system in particular. You have a responsibility to prevent such things, a responsibility implicit in the antitrust laws (if not explicit), IMHO.

Even ignoring the dangers inherent with such an anomalously large corporation, the behavior of Microsoft has been reprehensible in many ways. The court's original ruling (against Microsoft) was heralded as a major victory by most of the technical community, not because of a dislike of Microsoft products or even its pricing (though there are grumbles there, to be sure) but rather because so many fine companies and initiatives have been quashed by the heavy-handed policies of Microsoft.

I write this opinion using Microsoft Outlook, which in turn uses Microsoft Word as its editor. These are two of the finest products of their kind that have ever been, and represent only a small portion of the fine work that has been done by Microsoft. This does not change the fact that unless Microsoft's behavior is changed, and changed radically, the industry as a whole and consumers in general will be impacted in a deeply adverse way. The economy will remain at risk - and the consensus opinion among my peers is that Windows(tm) XP may be the block on which Microsoft finally stumbles. If this product does not destroy the company, it may still damage it to the point that the economy is severely hurt. Now may not be the time for fines of sufficient size to correct the company's behavior - I don't know - but the anti-competitive behavior must be stopped before the rest of the industry is ruined.

Finally, I must add that as an Engineer I keep up with opinion, feeling, and trends in my industry. I hear from conservatives, liberals, and neutrals; from technophiles and technophobes; from Microsoft fanatics and Microsoft-bashers; from management, labor, and (in short) just about everyone. Nobody with whom I've spoken, or who offers an opinion on the subject, thinks the Microsoft settlement is just. None of my technical

acquaintances (even those most enamored of Microsoft) believe that the company's policies are conducive to competition or growth within the industry. I know that such opinions must exist (perhaps among economists?), but I believe they must be taken as shortsighted.

Thanks for your time,
David Lambert, Jr.